



July 15, 2011

Ms. Marlene Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St. SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

**Re: Connect America Fund - WC Docket No. 10-90
A National Broadband Plan for Our Future – GN Docket No. 09-51
High-Cost Universal Service Support – WC Docket No. 05-337**

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On behalf of our members nationwide, the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (“NATOA”) respectfully writes in support of the comments submitted in this proceeding by the Schools, Health and Libraries Broadband (“SHLB”) Coalition to enhance the broadband capabilities of community anchor institutions in rural areas.

NATOA promotes community interests in communications. It represents local government jurisdictions and consortiums, including elected and appointed officials and staff, who oversee communications and cable television franchising. We have many members in rural areas that have difficulty obtaining affordable, high-capacity broadband connections. In rural northern California, for example, our Humboldt County-area member has worked for a number of years to expand broadband to both anchor institutions and unserved residences.

The current proceeding to reform the High-Cost Fund and to create a new Connect America Fund focused on broadband deployment in rural areas provides an important opportunity for the FCC to ensure that anchor institutions are able to serve the needs of their rural populations. We understand and agree with the desire to build broadband networks to residential consumers in rural areas; however, we respectfully suggest that the needs of community anchor institutions are just as important. Our members provide rural consumers with essential services, such as education, library services, social services, and all the other essential services delivered by local government entities. We often need much higher-capacity broadband services than those that are typically provided to residential consumers.

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The National Broadband Plan established as a national goal that “every American community should have affordable access to at least 1 gigabit per second broadband service to anchor institutions. . . .” By requiring those companies who receive financial support to build rural broadband networks to provide affordable, high-capacity broadband to anchor institutions, the FCC will go a long way toward achieving this goal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Traylor".

Steve Traylor
Executive Director
NATOA